



September 2014

Encounter

The newsletter of the Mercia Region of the Battlefields Trust

Introduction

With the exception of Chalgrove (1643) and Edgcote (1469), by the end of this year the region and its partner organisations will have walked all of the registered battlefields in its area. It will also have explored a couple of smaller, unregistered, battles at Nibley Green and outside Oxford. If you have any suggestions for other events or battlefields you would like to investigate, please let me know - my contact details are at the bottom of the page - as we are now in the process of planning 2015 events. Edgcote is already on the list and we are hoping to run a series of talks at Northampton Museum on Northamptonshire Battlefields in the New Year. We have also had some good news in the form of a grant from the Arms and Armour Heritage Trust to do a small amount of battlefield survey work at Stow to try and finally locate definitively the battlefield there. Threats to battlefields are, unfortunately, a fact of life and the region is continuing its battle to ensure the Nibley Green battlefield is protected. At Tewkesbury we have our fingers crossed that the bid by the Battlefield Society to buy part of the battlefield will be successful and ensure it is preserved and used as a community asset by this and future generations.

Events

Now well into the walking season, the region has run four walks since the April newsletter was published. An enjoyable driving tour of **Naseby (1645)** was ably led by Martin Marix Evans and Peter Burton on 15 June, though the turnout was low, probably due to wider Naseby events the day before. This has been discussed with the Naseby Project and the region will work harder to better coordinate its programme in future. New member Anthony Rich led a well organised and full walk around **Cropredy Bridge (1644)** on the anniversary of the battle in June. A well attended morning and afternoon walk examined the southern and northern parts of the battlefield, held a wreath laying ceremony at Cropredy Bridge

itself and explored churches with connections to the battle. The walk was kindly supported by members of the Sealed Knot in period costume which helped those attending the walk gain a better idea about the soldiers involved in the battle. Local Northampton representative Mike Ingram, working with the Medieval Siege Society and the Friends of Delapre Abbey, staged another successful **Northampton (1460)** battlefield day on 5 July. Mike's walk across and explanation of the battlefield was as popular as ever and the event proved again that working with partner organisations can help raise the profile of local battlefields. Rainy conditions did not dampen the annual wreath laying ceremony at **Evesham (1265)** for the 749th anniversary of the battle on 2 August led by the Simon de Montfort Society and supported by an afternoon walk led by Trust member Tony Spicer.



The Wardington Ash on the Cropredy Bridge battlefield near where King Charles I is supposed to have eaten his lunch before the battle commenced.

Tewkesbury (1471)

You will recall from previous newsletters that the Tewkesbury Battlefield Society had launched an appeal just after Christmas to purchase The Gaston fields, the only undeveloped part of the Tewkesbury battlefield as the school that owns the land wanted to divest itself of the site. The

Society was concerned that the land would be purchased for development despite the fact that in 1999 a planning application was turned down there following a public inquiry. With widespread local support, the campaign raised over £120,000 and a bid for the land has now been made with the result to be known in October. Further details on progress and the Battlefield Society's plans to transform the fields into an community, tourist and heritage asset can be found at <http://bit.ly/1e3oHiZ>.

Nibley Green (1470)

Some of you may have spotted on the Trust's website the threat from the installation of a solar panel array to the Nibley Green battlefield in Gloucestershire. This unregistered battle was the last on English soil which involved a private feud between members of the aristocracy and saw Thomas Viscount Lisle's 300 men defeated by the 1,000 or so under William Baron Berkeley. The Trust, along with a significant number of other local people and organisations, made an objection to Stroud District Council about the proposed development and the developer has now commissioned an archaeological plan to see, in part, whether there is evidence of the battle at the site. The Trust has told the Council that, in its view, the proposed archaeological approach is not appropriate for finding battle related evidence as it does not appear to conform to best practice for battlefield investigations.

Stow(1646)

As some of you will know there is some uncertainty about the precise location of the battle of Stow where that last royalist field army was defeated in the first Civil War. In June this year the region applied to the Arms and Armour Heritage Trust (AAHT) for a small grant to allow a small scale battlefield survey to be undertaken to try and identify the location of the battle. The AAHT generously made a grant available and the region hopes to undertake around half a dozen days of survey work over this coming winter under the supervision of an experienced battlefield archaeologist.

Mercia AGM 5 October 2014

The Mercia Region AGM will be held at the Castle Inn, Edgehill at 2:00pm on 5 October following a morning walk over the battlefield. If anyone is interested in standing for a position on the Mercia Region committee and would like to discuss it in advance of the

meeting they should feel free to contact me on the details at the foot of this page.

Battlefield Trust Events

Forthcoming Mercia events for your diary as follows. More details at <http://bit.ly/faZwkI>.

Battle of Tewkesbury 1471. Sunday 5 Oct, 2 Nov, 4 Dec, 4 Jan. All walks start at 2:30pm at The Crescent, GL20 5PD, next to the Abbey. If flooding occurs the walk may be cancelled. For details contact Steve Goodchild on 01684 294939.

Sunday 21 September 2014, First Battle of Newbury (1643). Meet Bowlers Arms public house, Enborne Street (RG14 6TW) at 11:00am for coffee and an introductory talk from Dr Chris Scott before exploring the battlefield. Contact Simon Marsh on 01844 274112 or merciam@battlefieldstrust.com for further details.

Wednesday 29 September 2014, Lambert Simnel Rebellion and the Battle of Stoke Field (1487). 12:30-2:00pm at the Fusilier Museum, Tower of London. Dr Chris Scott will talk about the last battle of the Wars of the Roses Tickets £20 for Trust members or £25 for non-members from <https://www.justgiving.com/Stokefield1487> or telephone 020-7387-6620

Sunday 5 October 2014, Edgehill (1642) and Mercia AGM. Meet at the Castle Inn (OX15 6DJ) at 10:30am for the walk of the battlefield and at 2pm for the Mercia Region AGM. Contact Simon Marsh on 01844 274112 or merciam@battlefieldstrust.com for further details.

Sunday 26 October 2014, Battles of Godstow Bridge (1644) and Islip Bridge (1645). Meet at St Nicholas Church, Islip (OX5 2SD) at 1pm. The walk is 5 miles and will last around 2.5 hours. Please bring stout footwear. For further details contact Gregg Archer on greggyarcher@hotmail.co.uk or 07899-900594.

Wednesday 29 October 2014, Richard III and Bosworth (1485) Rediscovered. 12:30-2:00pm at the Fusilier Museum, Tower of London. Professor Ann Curry talks about the rediscovery of Bosworth battlefield and Richard III. Tickets £20 for Trust members or £25 for non-members from <https://www.justgiving.com/Bosworth1485/> or telephone 020-7387-6620.

Simon Marsh